

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00274 111437Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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P R 111300Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4463

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

USUN NEW YORK 982

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0274

EXDIS

LONDON FOR HAVERKAMP

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RH, SF

SUBJECT: RHODESIAN DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE IN SOUTH AFRICA

ADVISES RHODESIAN GOVT TO TRY SITHOLE IN OPEN COURT

1. THIS MORNING RHODESIA'S DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE TO SOUTH AFRICA, AIR VICE-MARSHAL HAROLD HAWKINS, TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR. HE SAID HE HAD CONTACTED OTHER DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES AND CERTAIN SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMEN TO SOUND THEM OUT ABOUT RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO TRY REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE IN CAMERA. THEIR RESPONSE HAD ADDED TO HIS CONVICTION THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO TRY SITHOLE IN CLOSED COURT WOULD BE WIDELY CONDEMNED AND WOULD BE CERTAIN TO PREVENT RESUMPTION OF SETTLEMENT TALKS. HAWKINS ASKED WHETHER AMBASSADOR THOUGHT SITHOLE SHOULD BE TRIED IN OPEN COURT. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT HE AGREED ENTIRELY WITH HAWKINS' ASSESSMENT AND THAT IF RHODESIAN GOVT HAD A CASE AGAINST SITHOLE, HE SHOULD BE TRIED EXPEDITIOUSLY AND COMPLETELY OPENLY.

2. HAWKINS SAID THAT RHODESIAN GOVT HAD TWENTY-ONE WITNESSES, BUT THAT ONLY ONE WOULD TESTIFY, THE OTHER TWENTY REFUSING BECAUSE OF ALLEGED FEAR OF REPRISAL. HOWEVER, HAWKINS FEELS THAT REGARDLESS OF WHAT EVIDENCE HIS GOVT CAN MUSTER IN CASE

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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00274 111437Z

AGAINST SITHOLE, IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE TO PROCEED WITH IN

CAMERA TRIAL. HE THEREFORE HAS CABLED RECOMMENDATION TO RHODESIAN GOVT TO CHANGE ITS DECISION. IN DOING SO, HE SAID HE WOULD "LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY," INFERRING THAT HIS STANDING WITH HIS GOVT WAS LESS IMPORTANT TO HIM THAN AN ATTEMPT TO DISSUADE IT FROM PURSUING A DISASTROUS COURSE OF ACTION.

3. INFORMATION THAT RHODESIANS HAVE ONLY ONE WITNESS WILLING TESTIFY AGAINST SITHOLE IS CONSISTENT WITH STATEMENT MADE TO AMBASSADOR PRIVATELY BY SA STATE SECURITY DIRECTOR VAN DEN BERGH (REPORTED SEPTTEL) THAT RHODESIANS HAD ONLY ONE SWORN AFFIDAVIT AGAINST SITHOLE.  
HURD

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## Message Attributes

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